

Minutes of the Parks & Recreation Committee meeting February 26, 2020, at
Parks Gardens Rehabilitation and Nursing Center, 6585 Broadway

Attendees

Committee: Bob Bender (chair), Robert Fanuzzi (vice chair), David Gellman, Marvin Goodman, Rob Jacklosky, Donnel Leverett, Laura Spalter, Debra Travis

Absent: Herb Barret (CCM), Eric Bell, Eider Garcia, Daris B. Jackson

DPR: Stephanie Thayer, Deputy Administrator, Van Cortlandt Park

Community: Christina Taylor, Van Cortlandt Park Alliance; Laura Carpenter, Van Cortlandt House Museum; Patsy Smyth, Jacqueline Hosford, Joanne Nolan, Stewards of Brust Park; I.C. L'Engel, Bronx Council on Environmental Quality; Jim Wacker, Patti Bagwell, Chris Steffens

Agenda

The meeting began at 7:10 pm.

Update from the Stewards of Brust Park

The Stewards of Brust Park provided the committee with information about their plans for the year. They intend to do additional planting and continue their clean-ups in the park, as well as doing outreach to area students for community service and to summer camps with gardening information.

The Stewards are concerned about the dilapidated fence in the upper park near the Fieldston parking lot. They have also heard complaints about two triangular areas where Fieldston Road meets Manhattan College Parkway and hope that those median triangles can be improved. They offer to help. The chair noted that this area is most likely under the jurisdiction of DOT and will discuss with community board colleagues.

A quorum being present the minutes of the January meeting were approved unanimously with a correction to Christina Taylor's title.

Discussion of Committee Project with Enslaved Peoples Project in Van Cortlandt Park

Christina Taylor and Laura Carpenter spoke about "Living History Day," which they are planning for Thursday, June 11 at the Van Cortlandt House Museum. This event would be intended for fourth- and fifth-grade students in area public schools and would run from approximately 10 am to 2 pm. It would explain the lives of the enslaved people on the Van Cortlandt plantation through demonstrations of cooking, African-American drumming, historical talks about the enslaved

workers, and a guided walk around the Van Cortlandt House Museum and grounds. This event would be done in conjunction with the community board as part of the board's public outreach program under the grant given to the board for such purposes.

The Van Cortlandt Park Alliance has identified people who can do the demonstrations and will send a breakdown of the costs involved in hosting the event to the chair for discussion by the board.

This event will be part of the larger Enslaved Peoples Project, which will launch this spring and could become an ongoing activity in the park.

Committee members responded enthusiastically to the idea.

Committee Budget Requests

No new items were proposed. There was discussion of improvements that could be made to Fort Independence Park drainage and to Washington's Walk using existing DPR resources. The committee's budget requests will be finalized at the March meeting.

It's My Park Day

Debra Travis suggested projects that could be done at Washington's Walk. The committee will discuss further and finalize plans at the March meeting.

Irving Ladimer Community Service Award

A candidate was suggested and committee members approved. The chair will forward the suggestion to the board.

Parks Resource Guide

Rob Jacklosky, Laura Spalter, and Debra Travis comprise the working group updating the guide. They will report at an upcoming meeting. It was agreed that the revised edition should be electronic.

Old/New Business

The committee was briefed on various projects underway in Van Cortlandt Park, all of which seem to be on or close to schedule.

The Bronx Parks Speak-Up takes place this Saturday, February 29, at Lehman College.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 pm.

Submitted by Bob Bender

